

Minutes Alford Select Board and Finance Committee- Approved

January 8, 2024

Present: Select Board – Charles Ketchen, Peggy Rae Henden-Wilson, Peter Puciloski
Finance Committee- Joan Rogers, Carl Stewart, Tim Ortwein, Mort Josel

Meeting called to order at 6:01 pm

Minutes of December 11, 2023 Approved as written

Highway Report: Mr. Horrigan reported the sign in violation on White's Hill Road has been removed.

ADA Walkway- Mr. Horrigan reported Foresight boundary research deemed 90% of the property surrounding the Town Offices belongs to the Church.

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission- Mr. Horrigan reported the BRPC is going to apply for a State Traffic Safety Information Improvements Grant. They are seeking funds from all the towns in Berkshire County as this is a 25% matching grant. They are asking for a \$1000 commitment from Alford. Mr. Horrigan has the funds in his Highway budget.

Ms. Henden-Wilson made a motion to accept the proposal from the BRPC for the Traffic Safety Grant and allocate up to \$1000 from the Town of Alford. Mr. Puciloski seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

West Road BNRC parking area- Mr. Horrigan reported when the BNRC installed the parking area several years ago it diverted water south to 285 West Road, now that land owner has a large wet area which floods their driveway. Drainage and repairs have been made to the 285 West Road by a private contractor by installing a new larger culvert to direct the water south. The owner of 281 West Road is concerned that the amount of water coming from the diversion will in turn affect the culvert at their driveway. If the water from 285 West Road becomes an issue in the future Mr. Horrigan will meet with all parties involved to come up with a plan to fix the culvert at 281 West Road.

Mr. Horrigan reported he will be sending out a notice to caution folks not to plow driveway snow into the public roadway.

250th Celebration of Incorporation: Krista Annenberg submitted names to be appointed to the newly formed 250th Celebration Committee

Mr. Puciloski made a motion to appoint Krista Annenberg, Shirley Mueller, Nancy Johnson, Cheryl Raifstanger, Jean Raifstanger, Beth Schaeffer, Nevin Shalit, Bill Shein, Linda Volpano, Michael Wilcox, Samantha and Michael Maturana, Ronny Rosenberg and Christine Casarsa to serve on a one year on the 250th Celebration Committee. Ms. Henden-Wilson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms Henden-Wilson explained to Ms. Annenberg this committee will have to follow all of the State requirements of getting sworn in and taking the State Ethics test as well as the posting requirements of all their meetings. Ms. Halsted, Chair of the Alford Historic District Commission, stated her Commission has agreed to underwrite the sign posts since they will be part of the infrastructure and that would support the esthetic beauty of the Town.

Inspection Report 274 East Road- The Peoples Gym- Matt Kollmer, Building Inspector, did an inspection on January 5, 2024 at 274 East Road. The building has been emptied as promised. Further discussion reveled the contents had been moved out of state.

Southern Berkshire Volunteer Ambulance- Jim Santo, President, and members of the Ambulance Squad were in attendance. Mr. Santos gave an overview of operations. He noted revenue funding and staffing are still the largest obstacles the SBVA continue to face. Without adequate funding they are not able to hire or retain qualified staff. Mr. Santos reported the audit on the 2022 books is nearly complete and the books have not closed yet for 2023. Joe Kresjci, treasurer, reported salaries account for nearly \$1,000,000 of the budget. Mr. Kresjci stated the SBVA has not found it appropriate to base assessment on per ride calls volume vs. EQV. Mr. Ketchen asked if at some point the Ambulance Squad would consider another model of assessment if it were presented to them. Mr. Ortwein asked when the 2022 audit would be available and the SBVA stated in 30 days. Ms. Rogers proposed a blend of EQV and call volume.

Other Topics- Mr. Ortwein notified the Select Board that MA DOER will be having a joint meeting with several other towns submitting applications for municipal aggregation before submitting to the State DPU. Mr. Ortwein has agreed to attend this meeting on behalf of Alford.

Town Clerk- Ms. Hendon-Wilson has put a "Public Record Request" form on the Town Clerk's page on the website. Ms. Hendon-Wilson reported the Election Security Assessment will be on January 23, 2024.

Adjourned at 7:08 pm

Respectfully submitted
Roxanne Germain